

Concert to feature historic organ

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BY C. W. LATTIN
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At 3 p.m. May 8, Eastman School of music organ students will provide a progressive organ concert beginning at Christ Episcopal Church. Roy Smith, 2001 Albion alumnus, will also perform on trumpet.

This is the third program in the 2011 Eastman at Albion Courthouse Square Concert Series.

This organ program will continue at the First Presbyterian Church and end at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, followed by a reception back at Christ Church. It will be the first Eastman concert program over the last two years to utilize Christ Church. Therefore, I will focus this article on the Christ Church pipe organ. It was built and installed in 1877 as a memorial to Jonathan Blott (1813-1873) and his widow Sarah Harris Blott (1817-1893), both of whom are pictured here.

A marble tablet erected in Christ Church reads:

In Memoriam
Jonathan Blott

Born London England
June 4, 1813

Died February 28, 1873



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profitable business.

In 1839 he went back to England where he married Sarah Harris, and in 1840 they returned to Albion where he became prominent in many village affairs.

The Blotts had six children, three of which lived into adulthood. Their family home was located in the fine Greek Revival house at the corner of West Bank Street and North Clinton Street in the village.

In 1877, Mrs. Blott was persuaded to purchase a new pipe organ at the cost of \$2,000 for Christ Church, which she gave as a memorial to her late

husband. An organ chamber was then added. This fine instrument was built by Steer and Turner and remains today as a tracker action organ.

John Wesley Steere (1824-1900) began as an organ builder with his father-in-law, William Johnson at Westfield, Mass., in 1856.

He left this spot in 1866 to strike out on his own. In 1867, he was joined by George W. Turner (1929-1908). The spelling of Steere was changed in 1880, a year after they moved the business to Springfield, Mass.

Sons John and Frank Steer also worked at this business, where as many as 28 men were also employed. The company remained in the Steer name until 1921, when it was acquired by Ernest Skinner.

The Christ Church organ was restored in the 1980s as a gift to the congregation by Verna C. Possner, in memory of Rev. Vincent Browne Rector in the early 1950s.

C. W. Lattin is the Orleans County historian. His column appears every Thursday in The Journal-Register and The Albion-Advertiser.

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Bethinking of Olde Orleans

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord"

Lamentations 3:26

Blott came to this country when he was 19. He was a butcher by trade, first seeking work in New York City and then Albany. He eventually came to Albion where he opened a